



R. H. Worth.

DARTMOOR SHEEP BELLS II.

BY R. HANSFORD WORTH.

(Read at Honiton, 22nd June, 1939.)

DURING the past year I have seen two Dartmoor Sheep Bells which are of especial interest in that the original iron collars show the correct form of attachment to the bells, and each bell is in itself a duplicate of one of those described in the paper which I read last year.

WHITE BRONZE SHEEP BELLS.

<i>District.</i>	<i>Inscription.</i>	<i>Date.</i>	<i>Diameter at Mouth.</i>	<i>Height without suspension.</i>
12 Dartmeet	none	none	$3\frac{5}{16}$ ins.	$2\frac{3}{4}$ ins.
13 Dartmeet	B/14	none	$3\frac{3}{4}$ ins.	$2\frac{3}{4}$ ins.

No. 12 is in the possession of Mrs. Caunter of Dunnabridge Farm, and came to her from her family. There is no information as to its date; but it is precisely of the same type as No. 2, North Bovey district, and was probably cast from the same pattern. No. 2 bears the inscribed date "1778".

No. 12 has an iron collar, which is secured to the bell by a split pin. This is the only collar with a hinge that I have as yet seen. The hinge would obviously be needed if the bell were to be carried by a horned sheep, the non-hinged pattern could not be put on past the horns, the hinged pattern could be placed directly on the neck without being passed over the head.

No. 13 is in the possession of Mr. Frank Coaker, of Great Sherberton, and came to him from his family. There is no information as to its date, but it has the same dimensions and finish as No. 9, from Peter Tavy and bears the maker's mark B/14, whereas the Peter Tavy bell bears the mark "2 B/14". I do not think that any significance attaches to the absence of the figure 2 from the Great Sherberton bell; it may be due to a defect in moulding. Unfortunately the Peter Tavy bell bears no date.

No. 13 has an iron collar, of the same type as shewn with Nos. 4 and 6, and of these No. 4 bears the date 1798, but the

collars may not be of the same date as the bells. The collar of No. 13 is secured to the bell by a split pin.

See Plate A for illustrations of bells 12 and 13.

Turning from Dartmoor to East Devon, Miss C. E. Chapple has kindly sent to me from Axminster a yellow bronze bell of a type which I have not as yet seen on Dartmoor. This is a "cup" bell, its history is unknown. From the wear of the inside of the rim by the clapper the bell has obviously had considerable use. The cast-iron loop at the top does not show wear; it terminates in a disc which is cast into, and forms the crown of the bell. The original loop for the suspension of the clapper formed part of this iron head, but it has either been broken or worn through, and a new loop has been riveted through the bronze close to the margin of the iron head. There is a moulded ring in the bronze around the iron head; no part of the surface has been machined. The figure "5" is cast on bell near the iron cap.

The diameter at the mouth is $2\frac{1}{8}$ inches, the height excluding the suspension loop is $1\frac{7}{8}$ inches, and the thickness of the metal at the rim is 0.112 inches. Miss Chapple has kindly permitted me to photograph the bell, and it is illustrated on Plate A, number 14.

It is interesting that she has been told by a local farmer that sheep-bells are no longer in use by reason of the objection by the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, that their use involves cruelty to the sheep.